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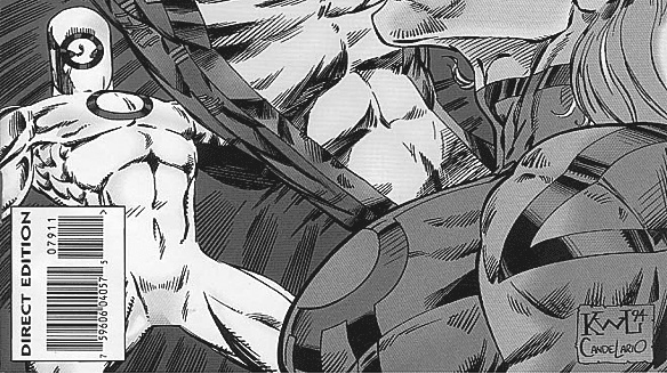
APPROVED
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EXCALIBUR

THE DOUG LOCK
CHRONICLES II

TECHNO-
ORGANIC
TERMINATION



DIRECT EDITION

07911



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KM⁹⁴
CANDELARIO



ONE-TENTH OF A SECOND AGO,
BEFORE THE ANDROID ZERO
TELEPORTED THEM HERE...

...THE MUTANT SUPER
HEROES OF EXCALIBUR
WERE BEING OVERGUN
BY KILLER DROIDS...

WELCOME,
MY
COMPANIONS!!!

...THE FAMILY EXCALIBUR WAS
TRYING TO PROTECT WAS A
HEARTBEAT AWAY FROM
EXTERMINATION...

...IN SHORT, THEY
WERE ALL AS GOOD
AS DEAD.

NOW, AS THEY SEE
WHERE "HERE" IS...

...THEY REALIZE THEY
WERE BETTER
OFF THAT WAY.

OH GOD,
NO...NO!



LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHO-- OR WHAT-- ANY OF YOU ARE...



...AND I DON'T CARE. WE WERE JUST CAMPING IN THE WOODS, AND SLOUGH WE'RE GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR SAVING OUR LIVES...

...FRANKLY, WHATEVER IT IS YOU'RE TANGLED UP IN, WE'VE HAD ENOUGH OF IT ALREADY.

NO, THE WOMAN IS RIGHT. NONE OF US KNOWS WHAT ANY OF THIS IS ABOUT...

...EXCEPT, PERHAPS, YOU, ZERO!



BUT YOU'VE TOLD US NOTHING! NOT WHY ENCALISER WAS SUMMONED THROUGH ME, TO SEEK YOU OUT!

NOT WHY OUR AIDING YOU IS SO IMPORTANT THAT I CAN FEEL THE PIRE WEIGHT OF THE CONSEQUENCES--BUT NOT UNDERSTAND THEM!

BUT I WILL UNDERSTAND...

---EVEN IF I HAVE TO WRING THAT KNOWLEDGE FROM YOUR BROKEN BODY!!



BE WARNED, ONE CALLED BRITANIC-- RECALIT ANY FELLOW TECHNO-ORGANIC, AND I WILL TAKE IMMEDIATE COUNTERMEASURES.

I DID NOT LEAVE THE PHALANK WOMB TO SEE HIM DESTROYED...!

PHALANK!? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

CEASE AND DESIST, BOTH OF YOU!!!



I ONLY KNOW THAT, ALONG WITH MY GROWING SENTIENCE, A PURPOSE LIES HIDDEN WITHIN ME!!!

THERE IS SO LITTLE TIME-- WE CANNOT AFFORD TO WASTE PRECIOUS MOMENTS BICKERING.

MOST OF YOUR QUERIES I CANNOT ANSWER, BRITANNIC, BECAUSE THE DATA IS UNAVAILABLE EVEN TO ME.

A PURPOSE THAT MY TECHNO-ORGANIC COMPANION WHO MIMICS THE FORM OF RAMSEY DOUG, AND I ARE DESPERATE TO DISCOVER.

THAT HIDDEN PURPOSE IS THE REASON STRIFE'S PRODS WERE PROGRAMMED TO DESTROY ME.

--EVEN TO THE POINT OF SLAUGHTERING INNOCENTS, LIKE THIS FAMILY, TO DO IT.

I COULD NOT ALLOW THAT. I TELEPORTED US ALL TO THIS BASE FULL OF DEACTIVATED STRIFE PRODS-- THE LAST PLACE THE PRODS WOULD SEARCH FOR US-- A BASE THAT HAPPENS TO BE BUILT--



BY THE POWERS!

MEGGAN?!



ER...ARE YOU ALL ALRIGHT, MISS?

MERELY SURPRISED, THAT'S ALL. MY ELEMENTAL SENSES FINALLY GOT A FIX ON OUR LOCATION!



STRIFE, THAT TWISTED PSYCHOPATH, DARED TO BUILD THIS BASE A FEW MILES DIRECTLY BENEATH--

"THE PENTAGON!"

THIS COULD BE
SERIOUS TROUBLE
FOR CERTAIN PERSONS.

YOU
HAVEN'T
YET.

--BUT DON'T
YOU THINK IT
BETTER IF THE
TEAM ACTS ON
THIS
IMMEDIATELY?

NO, I DON'T NOW
LET ME ASK YOU A
QUESTION, VAL--

"I SEE, I KNOW TWO
VALERIE COOPERS:
THE ONE WILLING TO BEND
THE RULES FOR THE PEOPLE
SHE TRUSTS--THE ONE
WHO GAVE ME THIS FILE--

...WHICH IS WHY I
PASSED THIS FILE
ON TO YOU IN THE FIRST
PLACE, FORBES.

MIND YOU, I DON'T
THINK I'VE EVER SECOND-
GUESSED YOU SINCE YOU
REPLACED ME AS X-FACTOR'S
GOVERNMENT LIAISON--"

* IN X-FACTOR #93.
--SUZE

...AND THE ONE WHO
DIDN'T KNOW WHEN TO
LET THOSE TRUSTED
PEOPLE PERFORM WITHOUT
INTERFERENCE--THE VAL
WHO GOT MISSED IN A PLESCO
CALLED WIDEAWAKE.

WHICH
VAL IS IT
GOING TO
BE TODAY?

I HAD A FEELING,
WHEN YOU TOOK OVER,
THAT I WAS LEAVING
X-FACTOR IN GOOD
HANDS.

NOW I'M
CERTAIN
OF IT.

I HOPE
THE SAME
CAPABLE
HANDS
FIND THAT
FILE.

IT'LL TAKE
MORE THAN
THAT IF
THIS FILE
PANS OUT.

...BUT THE
SOURCE OF
THIS COX
FORBES INFO
IS TOO SHAKY
TO ACT ON YET.
I'M AFRAID
YOU'RE ON YOUR
OWN FOR NOW,
CARMEN
PRYDE.

SHADOWCAT'S
FATHER, OR NOT.



MEANWHILE, ON A TINY
ICE OFF THE COAST
OF SCOTLAND...

...THE MUIR ISLAND RESEARCH
FACILITY, HOME BASE OF EX-
CALIBUR, SITS PRECARIOUSLY
ON A BLUFF, A MAN-MADE SHELTER
TO KEEP THE VIOLENT NORTH SEA
AT BAY...

...THOUGH EVEN WITHIN THESE
WALLS, HUMANITY'S STRUGGLE
AGAINST THE VIOLENCE OF NATURE
GOES ON, ALBERT ON A DIFFERENT
FRONT.

IN THIS CASE, NATURE HAD SOME HELP
FROM A MADMAN NAMED STRIFE...

...THE VIOLENCE HE CREATED
TAKES THE FORM OF A DEADLY
VIRUS CALLED LEGACY...

...AND THE STRUGGLE FOR A
CURE LIES IN THE WEARY ARMS
OF DR. MOIRA MACTAGGART
AND PROFESSOR CHARLES
XAVIER.

THE VIRUS
IS DEFINITELY
MUTATING... BUT
INTO WHAT?

THE STRAIN WE
INITIALLY IDENTIFIED
TARGETED THE VICTIMS'
DNA, LOCKING THE MUTANT
VARIANT IN THEIR GENETIC
CODE AS THE ACCESS
POINT...

...WITH THE SAME
DEVASTATING RESULT
IN EVERY CASE...



--REVENGE, MASTER-MIND, EVEN WEE ILLYANA--
EACH OF THEIR OWN SE-
QUENCES, SLOWLY BROKE
UP, THEIR MUTANT POWERS
RUNNING WILD, CONSUM-
ING THEM.

AND POOR
JAMIE
MADROX...

THE SAME WOULD HAVE
HAPPENED TO HIM, IF HE--
IF HE HADN'T BEEN MUR-
DERED FIRST.

IS THIS WHAT
WE'VE COME TO,
MOIRA ...

LOD HAVE MERCY,
BUT PHARO WAS THE
LUCKY ONE.



WISHING OUR
FRIENDS THE LEAST
PAINFUL DEATH
POSSIBLE?



ALL THESE YEARS,
I THOUGHT I WAS
PREPARING MUTANT-
KIND TO FACE THE
WORST...

...THOUGHT THAT, IF
ANYTHING, THE THREAT
WAS MEGALOMANIACS
LIKE MAGNETO, OR THE
PREJUDICE THAT SPANNED
THE SENTINELS.

BUT TO BURY OUR
FAMILIES, OUR FRIENDS...
EVEN OUR ADVERSARIES...
BECAUSE OF A
DISEASE ...



...IT'S MORE
THAN I CAN
BEAR.

YE
MUSTN'T
GIVE UP,
CHARLES.
NOW MORE
THAN EVER,
YOUR
NEEDED!

OR HAVE YE
FORGOTTEN A PROMISE
MADE A LIFETIME AGO
WHEN WE WERE AN
ITEM...

...A PROMISE MADE
TO A STARRY-EYED LASS
BY A SUPREMELY
CONFIDENT YOUNG
MAN...

"ON THE FRENCH RIVIERA..."



YOUR SURE, ARE YE
THEN, THAT IF EVENTS
CONTINUE ON THEIR
PRESENT COURSE...

...THAT
HUMANS AND
MUTANTS FACE
A COMMON
DISASTER?

ABSOLUTELY.
JUST AS I'M SURE
THAT, WORKING TO-
GETHER IN PEACE,
THE TWO BRANCHES
OF MANKIND CAN
AVERT THAT
DISASTER.

I KNOW IT CAN
HAPPEN--AND I'M DE-
TERMINED TO MAKE
IT SO!



I DINNAE
BELIEVE YE,
CHARLES
XAVIER...

...NOT WHEN
YE CANNOT
EVEN LOOK
AT ME WHEN
YOUR SAYIN'
IT!



I'LL MAKE IT HAPPEN--
AND THAT'S A *PROMISE*,
MOIRA.

FEH!

BUT WHY TAKE MY WORD,
WHEN I CAN *PROVE* IT
TO YOU? I'M A *MUTANT*,
YOU'RE *HUMAN*...

...LET'S TEST THE
HYPOTHESIS...



<THERE'S A
SIGHT, EH,
PAUL? *GEEK
LOVE*?>

<KARL,
NOT SO
LOUD!
THEY MIGHT
UNDERSTAND-->



<CAN YOU BELIEVE
THEM? MAKING SUCH
A *SPECTACLE* OF
THEMSELVES ON A...>



<...PUBLIC...
BEACH...>



YAHOO!

KARL ???

CHARLES--
THAT WAS
UNETHICAL!

I
KNOW!

FOR A TELEPATH
TO INVADE ANOTHER
MIND, SUPPRESS HIS
INHIBITIONS... IT WAS...

WELL DESERVED!

--MILARIOUS!



YOU WERE *IRREPRESSIBLE*
BACK THEN... SO *WHATEVER*
HAPPENED TO THAT *IRREPRESS-*
IBLE YOUNG MAN?

I DON'T
KNOW,
MOIRA...

ANOTHER
VICTIM OF THIS
DISEASE, I
SUPPOSE.



NO--NOT HIM...
SOME OTHER
YOUNG LOVER...
I'M AFRAID...

BUT
NEVER
HIM.

DO THIS? MOIRA-- WE'VE
BEEN AT THIS FOR 30 HOURS
STRAIGHT. WE'RE STRESSED
OUT, EXHAUSTED... NO
WONDER YOU'RE LIPSET.

WE SHOULD QUIT
FOR A FEW HOURS.
GET SOME REST.

I DON'T
HAVE TIME
FOR REST!



MOIRA?
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?

NO, CHARLES.
I'M NOT ALL
RIGHT. I...

OH, LOOK AT ME, WEEDIN' AND
CARRYIN' ON LIKE A WEE TOT. THAT'S
NOT HOW I WANTED TO DO THIS...

THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN
TRYIN' TO TELL YE, CHARLES.
I'M SURPRISED YE HAVEN'A
GUESSED BY NOW.

GUESSED
WHAT?

THE
UNTHINK-
ABLE.



COMPUTER,
RUN PROGRAM!
FINALE.

IN STRIFE'S BASE...

SO TO ESCAPE STRIFE'S DROIDS, WE ARE TO HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT AS IT WERE... AMONG STRIFE'S DROIDS?

AND HOW LONG WILL THESE REMAIN DEACTIVATED?

UNKNOWN. THAT IS WHY WE MUST ACT QUICKLY!!!

!! AND DISCOVER THE SECRET THAT THE DROIDS WILL DESTROY ME, YOU, AND THIS FAMILY TO PROTECT...

I KNOW YOU...

...I SAW YOU IN THE WOODS, WITH THE BLANK MAN.

YOU REFER TO MY FELLOW TECHNO-ORGANIC, ZERO.

UH-HUH. BUT YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAVED ME.

THOSE ACTIONS WERE MORELY COMPATIBLE WITH SITUATIONAL PARAMETERS.

KLAST ISSUE. --SUE

UH-HUH. I LIKE YOU, TOO.



MIL0
LIKES YOU,
TOO.

"MIL0"?

DO THE STUFFED
ANIMAL **LIKES** YOU,
SH-- "DOUG"?



WHY IT'S JUST
GLUSHY WARM
FEELINGS ALL
AROUND. ISN'T IT--
"DOUG"?

CRYPTOGRAPHIC SYSTEMS
DETECT A **DOUBLE**
MEANING TO YOUR
WORDS, SHADOWCAT.

...AND VOICE PATTERN
ANALYSIS REVEALS A
HIGH **STRESS** LEVEL.



YOU BET I'M
STRESSED, BUSHER!
STRESSED BECAUSE
IT'S OBVIOUS YOU'RE
NOT DOUG FANCY.

--AND I WON'T ALLOW A
COLD, UNWILLING THING TO
MAKE A MOCKERY OF MY
DEAD FRIEND, DO
YOU HEAR?

"NARROW-
MINDED"?

PERFECTLY. 10,0003 DECIBELS.
HOWEVER, YOU ARE MISTAKEN
ABOUT MY **STATUS**. I AM,
IN FACT, A **LIVING BEING**...

...THOUGH APPARENTLY I DO NOT
CONFORM TO YOUR SOMEWHAT
NARROW-MINDED DEFINITION
OF THE TERM.



PERHAPS YOU
WOULD FEEL
MORE COMFORT-
ABLE REFERRING
TO ME AS
DOUGLOCK.



"NARROW-
MINDED"?



WHY, YOU MISDEGOTTEN
SONUNA MICROWAVE--!

ANOMALY--SHADOWCAT--
ACTIVATING--MUTANT--
PHASING--POWER

FRZZZZZZT



PENETRATION--BY INTANGIBLE
APPEARANCE--PROFILING
MASSIVE SYSTEMS DISRUPTION.
REINTEGRATING...

CURIOS... THAT SUCH AN
EMOTIONAL RESPONSE
SHOULD BE TRIGGERED BY
MERE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.

YEAH, WE
REAL PEOPLE
ARE FUNNY THAT
WAY. DEAL
WITH IT...



...AND STAY
OUT OF MY
WAY FROM NOW
ON. GOT IT?

I'M SO GLAD
WE HAD THIS LITTLE
CHAT-- "DOUGLOCK"

IS EVERYTHING ALL
RIGHT BACK THERE,
SHADONCAT?

JUST REACHY,
ANY PROGRESS
HERE?

I STILL
HAVE NO
ANSWERS!

I CANNOT
REMEMBER WHY
IT WAS SO FATAL
TO AID ZERO...

...NOR IS ZERO
OFFERING ANY SATISFACTORY
EXPLANATIONS!

I HAVE NONE OF THE
PROCES OF MY DATA FILES
AND MY ATTEMPTS TO EXPLORE
MY ROLE IN THE LARGER WORLD!!!

NONSENSE! YOU
ARE THE KEY--THEREFORE
YOU MUST KNOW WHAT
IT IS YOU UNLOCK!

PLEASE, BRITANNIC-- I CAN SENSE
ZERO'S FRUSTRATION AND CONFUSION
ARE EQUAL TO YOUR OWN.

PATIENCE AND
CALM ARE OUR BEST
MEANS TO FURTHER
UNDERSTANDING.

I UNDERSTAND
THAT HIS ARTIFICIAL
BRAIN HOLDS A SECRET SO
IMPORTANT, STRIFE REACHED
FROM THE GRAVE TO
DESTROY HIM!

WHY CAN'T HE
SIMPLY ACCESS
THAT KNOWLEDGE?!

STRIFE MUST
HAVE PROTECTED
THE RESIDANT FILED.
I AM LIMITED BY
THAT PROGRAMMING.

///I AM... SORRY. I--



WAIT, MEGGAN--
WHAT DO YOU JUST
SAY?

THAT PATIENCE AND
CALM WOULD LEAD TO
UNDERSTANDING?



NO!!! SOMETHING
ELSE... BEFORE
THAT!!!

I FAIL TO SEE
THE SIGNIFICANCE
OF...

IT HAD NO
SIGNIFICANCE
TO OUR DATA
SEARCH--OR
PERHAPS EVERY
SIGNIFICANCE!!!

DO YOU NOT SEE?
MEGGAN SENSED
FEELINGS, EMOTIONS,
LIFE... FROM ME!

I AM, AT LAST,
A FULLY LIVING,
SENTIENT BEING!

I... FEEL

OF COURSE--
THAT I COULD
SENSE YOUR
FRUSTRATION AND
CONFUSION!

I ONLY KNOW
ITS SIGNIFICANCE
TO ME.

AND QUIETLY FROM ABOVE,
PREVIOUSLY INACTIVE
SYSTEMS GO ON LINE.

.....feelings, emotions, life...
...sentient, sentient, sentient.....

.....ACTIVATION
TRIGGERED.

INITIALIZING
SYSTEMS...

SO...
I JUST
WANTED TO
SAY THANKS.

YOU
CARED.
CARING'S AN
EMOTION.
RIGHT?

I MEAN, I KNEW
YOU HAD FEELINGS
WAY LONG AGO. GET
WITH THE PROGRAM,
DUDE.

YOU KNEW??
BUT HOW--?

C'MON--YOU SAVED
ME 'N' MY FOLKS WHEN YOU
DIDN'T HAVE TO...

THE BOY SPEAKS THE TRUTH.
YOU COULD HAVE RUN AWAY FROM
THE DANGER, BUT YOU CHOOSE
TO STAY AND HELP THEM.

WELL...YES!
I'M YES, I
SUPPOSE SO, S...

.....I'M AWARE! AND WITH
AWARENESS COMES KNOWLEDGE.
AT LAST, I KNOW!

DIRECTIVE 000.0
APPLIES

DELETE ZERO

THE
DROIDS--!!

WHOOA WHOOA
WHOOA WHOOA

YES--BECAUSE
MY SENTIENCE
HAS FINALLY
OVERCOME
STRYFE'S
PROGRAMMING...

...AND, IN THE
NAME OF THEIR
DEAD MASTER,
STRYFE'S
DROIDS WILL
STOP AT
NOTHING TO
DESTROY ME AND
THE KNOWLEDGE
I HOLD!

THEY'RE NOT INACTIVE
ANYMORE! THEY'RE SELF-
DESTRUCTING--TRYING
SO MUCH THIS WHOLE
PLACE AND US WITH IT!

FOR WITHIN
MY SYSTEMS,
I POSSESS
HIS FINAL
ULTIMATE
SECRET--

--I HOLD THE SECRET OF
THE LEGACY VIRUS!





--I'M PULLING
UP THE DNA MODEL
ON THE HOLODISPLAY.

CHARLES, WHAT
WE'RE SEEING IS NOT
JUST A SLIGHT
VARIATION OF ITS
PATHOLOGY--

--THE LEGACY VIRUS
IS SPREADING...
TO THE HUMAN
POPULATION.

NEXT
ISSUE
JOIN
US IN
THIRTY FOR THE
DRAMATIC
CONCLUSION TO THE
DOUGLOCK
CHRONICLES--
THE SECRETS OF
ZERO-- THE
FUTURE OF
DOUGLOCK--
AND A GLIMPSE
AT THE LAST
HOPE FOR MAN
AND MUTANTS
ALIKE!

SWORD STROKES

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SUZANNE GAFFNEY • EDITOR • BOB HARRAS • GROUP EDITOR

To the creative team of EXCALIBUR,

I am 18 years old, and have only been collecting comics since this past summer. However, in that short amount of time I have amassed a rather large collection. One of the books which I have really taken a strong liking to is EXCALIBUR. The reason why this book caught my interest is the strong characters. One of these strong characters I am referring to is Rachel Summers. I believe Rachel stated her fate best in the pages of EXCALIBUR #75 when she said, "This is so UNFAIR!" What happened to her is unfair. However, it is this kind of story writing that makes me love reading Marvel books. Anyway, what you guys decided to do was ruin the best day of her life, with Scott and Jean getting hitched, by making it essentially the last day of her life. Now I know that in comics anything can happen, and Phoenix could reappear in a month, a year, or never, but I feel you guys made a mistake and weakened EXCALIBUR here.

In this storyline, Megan served as an anchor to Captain Britain in the present time stream. Well, I'd like to point out that my predictions are pretty good. I instantly pegged Dr. Rory Campbell as Ahab. Thus let me point out you are missing out on a great conflict between Rachel and Campbell, who shall we say she's taken a liking to. Anyway, my point goes back to EXCALIBUR #71 and CABLE #9 when Rachel and Cable realized they were telepathically linked. Thus I pose the question, will Cable serve as Rachel's anchor to this time? In CABLE #10, Cable said that he felt he and Rachel were linked telepathically, and that this link would last forever. Now I'm not sure if this is right, but I think it sounds good anyway. So hustle up and bring Phoenix back.

Steve Nash
3 Westminster Drive
Annandale, NJ 08801

Thanks for voicing the concern of many readers who wrote in asking if they've seen the last of Rachel. We like Rachel as much as you do, Steve, and we're not about to let her drift away into the "never-seen-again characters" bin. The most I can tell you right now is to get a hold of the CYCLOPS AND PHOENIX Limited Series by Scott Lobdell, Gene Ha, and Al Vey. As well as giving you a great read, it'll fill you in on where Rachel's gone off to. As the mother of the Askan! Sisterhood, you can believe we've got some big plans

for Rachel. Feel better, Steve?

Dear Suzanne,

EXCALIBUR has been getting better all the time. Focusing on the ex-X-Men and bringing the team into continuity and closer contact with the other X-books has been a great change. Please don't bring back any of the old members, except maybe Megan.

A great addition to the team would be Colossus. The teams new direction and emphasis would fit into his philosophy and would bring him back with Kitty and Kurt and the X-family.

I really like Kitty's new uniform and I hope Moira will be a crucial part of the team.

Will we see Revanche heading to the island due to her disease? Maybe Karma or Mirage will join the team? Warlock would be a great addition, too, don't you think?

Anyway, it's great to see the team finally getting away from cross-time and into real continuity.

Thanks!

M. Hughes

(Address withheld by request)

You're welcome, "M". For such a short letter you managed to bring up lots of points we wanted to fill you guys in on. First, as you've already seen, Megan is coming back, with a new look and newly formed identity based on Captain Britain's new view of the world. She's also going to be bringing more and more to the mix with the strengthening and expanding of her abilities, as well as a well-deserved boost in her self-esteem. As far as Captain Britain goes, well, he's back but having been from one end of the timestream to the other has definitely changed this hero. He's far from being omnipotent in that he hasn't seen everything, just certain "snippets" of the timeline—just enough to really confuse him. Give them a chance and then let us know what you think.

Since you mentioned Revanche, we'll say no, she's not coming to the island for treatment, but it does remind us that this is a good spot to let you know about this year's annual. It's going to feature the X-Men's telepathic ninja, Psylocke, and Jamie Braddock. Now that Cap's back and a little "confused", crazy brother Jamie's decided to come out of hibernation and see

if he can finish the job that temporal wave started! Psylocke will certainly have her hands full with this mess! The annual's out in July.

As far as Karma goes...we agree! It's in the works to have her visit Muir. More details on that later.

And the last point—Warlock. Don't miss the last part of the Douglock Chronicles next issue. Douglock and his connections to the Phoenix bring EXCALIBUR into a heap o' trouble in this summer's crossover, called THE PHALANX COVENANT. EXCALIBUR #82 will be a double-sized issue just so that we can cram as much story as possible into it! With all the X-Men who will be involved in this storyline, writer Scott Lobdell's made artist Ken Laszley one very happy little penciler, which means we're in for something really, really special!

Aren't ya' glad ya' wrote, "M"?

Dear Marvel

Hey, no fair! I thought Ken Laszley was supposed to be the regular artist on EXCALIBUR! You'd better have him back next issue, and on more than just the cover, or I might not continue to buy EXCALIBUR.

Ken Laszley is a very talented artist, and I look forward to seeing his work appear in EXCALIBUR as well as perhaps in other Marvel titles. For now I just want you all to know that the name of Ken's Number One fan is:

Tue Sorenson
Denmark

Wow, Tue—Ken's blushing! We think his work's pretty groovy, too. Ken is the regular artist. Due to the difficulties in trying to get his book back on its regular monthly schedule we have been lucky to have some other really talented folks help us out on an issue here and there. As you saw this issue, we're back on track (and on the rack on time) so you'll be seeing lots more of Ken!

Dear Suzanne,
Re: EXCALIBUR #75

I am taking this opportunity to commend you and your creative team on a brilliant 75th issue. While I personally was dissatisfied by the ending

(Keep Rachel...or better yet, dump Meggan into the time stream with Cap, er, Brian). I look forward to reading of Phoenix's battle to return to our continuum.

The real reason I'm writing is the last 4 pages of your book. It really moved me. Seeing Kurt's sadness, his heavy heart and the priest's own anguish truly affected me. The way Kurt yanked and pulled and tugged his scarf as if wrestling with his niche in life, and then finally coming to grips with his own cross was beautiful. Kudos to Jim, Tim, Richard, and Greg. Thanks, guys.

Jordan Bateman
Langley, BC
Canada VIM 2G2

Thanks, Jordan. We thought A DEMON WENT TO CHURCH ON TUESDAY was a great little look into the self-doubt we all go through. Kurt's come to grips with his responsibilities now and we think you'll be seeing a little more of the devil-may-care attitude Kurt is so famous for. Errol Flynn, eat your heart out.

Suzanne,

Great new art team, but most importantly the story is once again outstanding. Scott Lobdell is one of the finest talents in comic books today.

I would like to thank you for the backup story on the chivalrous elf himself, Kurt Wagner. He's always been one of the best comic book characters ever created.

Todd Maxwell
(Address withheld by request)

Glad you liked it, Todd. We think you have excellent taste.

Dear Suzanne,

The mini story, A DEMON WENT TO CHURCH ON TUESDAY deserves a letter. Much of the media in America today is all into political correctness, feeling good, and generally some of the poorer attributes of liberalism. Nightcrawler's tale line pun intended was a masterful example of how an individual's firm dedication in a dare-say-it old-fashioned and conservative religion helped him get through his troubles.

I've read descriptions of how Kurt's physical appearance makes others assume him to be a devil, but never have I seen it so clearly as during his rescue of Karen Wallis from the fire.

You did exactly what comic books are supposed to do above other communications mediums. You used pictures to tell a thousand words in an entertaining format. You should be very proud of yourselves for printing that ministry, and you've made me like Marvel again. Thanks.

John Beckwith
(Address withheld by request)

Welcome back, John. Glad to have ya' back again!

Dear Sword Strokes,

After complaining to my brother all summer long about how I had nothing good to read, he showed me his EXCALIBUR. I was hooked. Well, now I have my own subscription—and some questions.

Waay back in EXCALIBUR #7, during INFERNO, Kitty acquired Illyana's Soul Sword. I read all my brother's issues and I could find no further developments on it, except for in a letter column that said more was going to unfold about it in the near future. Well, then my idiotic brother stopped subscribing and I was left hanging.

Now that I have my own subscription, when I saw the recent death of Illyana, it perked my interest again. Whatever happened to the Soul Sword that was outside the lighthouse? Is it still there? What happened to it when Illyana died?

I know these questions are old, and you've probably already answered them in some other issues, but I was hoping you could tell me where this was all resolved—if it was.

You guys are the best! I've never read a Marvel comic I didn't like. By the way—I loved the art in #75. Tim Sale is great. Will we see more of him?

M.K. Harding
(Address withheld by request)

M.K.—the Soul Sword is indeed going to be back in the limelight, so to speak. Check out issues #83-85.

And how about apologizin' to your brother for calling him an idiot. He got you into EXCALIBUR, didn't he? That counts for a lot in our book...

Dear Sword Strokes,

After reading issues #71-73, I had to write in. I had to express my feelings on some important issues concerning this great mutant team. First of all, I am so happy that Excalibur is now a part of the X-Groups. I have always considered them one and it made me mad that nobody else did. Well, I am glad at your decision to include them. It is about time.

Now to some comments on all of the members of this team and their love interests.

1) Shadowcat—After issue #71, I feel that there is no other choice than to get her and Colossus back together. I know that it might be hard because he has joined the Acolytes, but they belong together. She was the one who finally got him to grieve for Illyana. Now, they truly belong together.

2) Nightcrawler—I cannot wait to see his origin and his relationship with Mystique in X-MEN UNLIMITED #4. Please explore his origin a little bit more. And have him get back together with Amanda Sefton. We have not seen

her since the Muir Island Saga. I think it is time that these two got back together. Please make it happen.

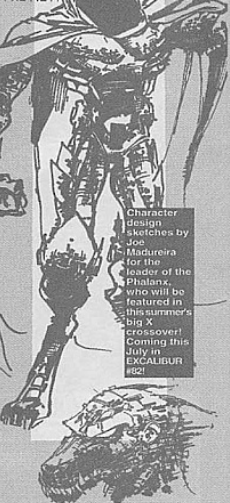
Thank you for listening and printing my letter. I just had to express my feelings on this. Please listen to a loyal fan and take these suggestions into consideration.

Shane Bekkemellon
6705 Village Road
Salt Lake City, UT 84121

Well, Shane, now that you've had a chance to get a hold of X-MEN UNLIMITED #4 and the last couple issues of EXCALIBUR, I hope you haven't been disappointed.

And as far as relationships go...you are going to love EXCALIBUR #81...no doubt about it! Hope you can hang on till then!

**SNEAK
PREVIEW**



Character design sketches by Joe Madureira for the leader of the Phalanx, who will be featured in this summer's big X crossover! Coming this July in EXCALIBUR #81!

WELCOME TO ONE OF
THE MANY BASES
OF MY LATE MASTER
STRYFE!

QUERY: SINCE IT WAS STRYFE'S
DROIDS THAT WENT TO
TERMINATE US--

--AND AS THERE
ARE 3,362 SUCH
DROIDS IMMEDIATELY
ABOVE US--

--WAS
TELEPORTING
TO THESE COORDIN-
ATES PRUDENT?

PRUDENT?
THEY'RE GOING TO
KILL US!!





WAIT. LOOK
AT THEM. THEY
SEEM TO BE
INERT.

YOUR ANALYSIS IS CORRECT--
SHADOWCAT, IS IT?--THE
PRODS ARE DEACTIVATED
FOR THE MOMENT.

WHICH IS PRECISELY
WHY WE ARE HERE.

STAN LEE PRESENTS
EXCALIBUR IN PART 2 OF THE
DOUGLOCK CHRONICLES

TWISTED LOGIC

SCOTT LOBDELL --
CHRIS COOPER --
KEN LASHLEY --
HARRY CANDELARIO +
RANDY ELLIOTT
DAVE SHARPE --
CHRIS MATTIN --
SUZANNE GATTFNEY --
BOB HARGIS --
TOM DEPALCO --

PLOT
SCOTT
PENCILS
INKS
LETTERING
COLORING
EDITOR
GROUP EDITOR
EDITOR IN CHIEF

EXCALIBUR Vol. 1, No. 19, July, 1994 (1994 FIC-134) Published by MARVEL COMICS, Terry Stewart Publisher, Stan Lee Publisher, Mark Hudson, Doug M. Mackay, Publisher, OFFICE OF PUBLICATION SET PAUP, AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10018. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE IS PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright © 1994 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price \$1.50 per copy in the U.S. and \$2.00 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: U.S. \$23.40; foreign \$36.40; and Canadian subscribers must add \$10.00 for postage and GST. GST #R12302502. The liability between any of the names, characters, designs, and/or costumes in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of the cover or any other material, nor in a mutilated condition. EXCALIBUR (including all prominent characters featured in the issue and the distinctive characters) is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO EXCALIBUR, c/o MARVEL DIRECT MARKETING INC./SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 1978, DANBURY, CT. 06813-1978. TELEPHONE (212) 686-0810. Printed in Canada.



ELSEWHERE...

...IN THE **TECHNO-ORGANIC** WOMB THAT SPANNED THE MYSTERIOUS GROUP CALLED THE PHALANK, THE CROWNING CENTER OF THAT COLLECTIVE MIND STIRS.

HIS NAME IS **STEPHEN LANG**, AND WITH HIS **HARDWIRED INPUTS** TO THE PHALANK **MAIN-FRAME ACTIVATED**, HE CONTROLS EVERY FACET OF THE COLLECTIVE...

...OR SO HE THOUGHT.

WHERE

IS

RAM-SEY?

SEVERAL CODED TRANS... MISSIONS REQUIRE

ANALYSIS COUNTER-INTelligence PASSWORDS NEED DE CIPHERING

AND DESPITE SUMMONS AFTER SUMMONS, THE PRIMARY CRYPT... OGRAPHIC.

UNIT REMAINS OFFLINE ??!

THERE... SEEMS TO BE A
SYSTEMS ERROR.

THE **RAMSEY** CRYPTOGRAPHIC
PROGRAM IS ABSENT FROM ALL
RETRIEVABLE SUBSYSTEMS.

THOUGH IT DEFES
PROBABILITY...

...IT WOULD SEEM THAT
RAMSEY HAS BEEN
PERMANENTLY REMOVED
FROM THE **PHALANX**
MATRIX!

QUARTER
MASTER
LIMIT-- REPORT
CURRENT STATUS
OF CRYPTOGRAPHER
RAM--SEY

~~~~~

HHAAT?!  
HOW?

ONLY BY MEANS OF TECHNOLOGY  
MORE ADVANCED THAN OUR OWN:  
A CATEGORY LIMITED TO MR. SINISTER,  
**APOCALYPSE**, AND **STRY--**

THIS IS ALL BUT  
A MINOR PART OF  
OUR GRAND  
DESIGN, AS LONG  
AS YOU AND I  
WORK TOGETHER,  
THAT PLAN IS  
UNASSAILABLE.

PER HAPS...  
BUT I STILL  
WANT TO KNOW

FAILURE...  
I CANNOT  
TOLERATE  
FAILURE!

CALM  
YOURSELF,  
LANG...

WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO RAM--SEY?